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National Co-operative Quarries, Ltd.

The National Co-operative Quarries, what they are...

London

[1906]

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THE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE OUARRIES. * * * *

WHAT THEY ARE. WHAT THEY WANT TO DO. WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO DO.



1906

The National Co-operative Quarries.

WHAT THEY ARE.

WHAT THEY WANT TO DO.

WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO DO.

E

Co-operative Quarries, Ltd., is an industry controlled by Labour for Labour. Representative Trade Unionists comprise the Board; only Trade Unionists will they employ. It is to Trade Unionists and their friends that they look for custom and support.

To-day the organized workers are large purchasers of slate. Powerful and progressive Unions, like the British Steel Smelters, spend thousands of pounds, and spend them wisely, in erecting dwellings for their members, from which those members cannot be evicted—as at Hemsworth—when "Strike" is the order of the day. Co-operative Societies—with their manifold diverse 'activities—are putting up all sorts and conditions of buildings, in nearly every part of the Kingdom. Last, but not least, Town Councils and Corporations, pledged to fair conditions of labour, are building on a huge scale—building for the workers!

To whom do the orders for these slates go? Chiefly to quarries worked under the worst possible conditions. Labour buys thousands of tons of slates from employers whose attacks on the right of combination Labour has spent thousands of pounds in resisting. Almost every housing scheme that the Labour Party initiates means that a large order goes to a quarry that has become a by-word for bad faith and harsh treatment.

Almos' every labourer's cottage is roofed with slate won by broken and embittered men, who are denied rights conceded in every other industry. It is to end this sinister dependence

A Corner of the Quarry.

that The National Cooperative Quarries has
come into existence, and
that her Directors appeal
now to all who care for
industrial progress, and
who are concerned in
any way with the building
industry for resolute and
prompt support. They
say to them, to all Trade
Unionists, to all Co-operators, and to all who
care for fair play and industrial freedom:—

"Refuse to depend for your slate on the sweater and the monopolist. You need depend so no longer. The National Co-operative Quarries are in a position to guarantee to you that the slate which they produce

is as good as any on the market. More, that slate is as cheap, and is produced under Trade Union conditions by Trade Union quarrymen. It is, therefore, an obligation upon you as Trade Unionists to see that any body building for the workers gives the preference to the Trade Union slate, and not to that produced under conditions the quarrymen resisted at such a dreadful cost to the mselves."

And lest that obligation be forgotten, see what its neglect involves. Everyone remembers the heroic struggle of the Bethesda quarrymen. That struggle is over, but not all the quarrymen are back at work. Over one thousand of them are still locked out. Some have shaken the dust of their native valley from their feet, and gone overseas. Some are in the coal-

fields of South Wales, some are starving in Bethesda. There is in this a distinct danger - the loss of that valuable social asset, the quarrymen's craft. Quarrying requires long and early apprenticeship, and great skill; it must be learnt young -or it cannot be learnt at all, and the fewer quarries and quarriers, the less plentiful the supply of good slate; a consideration which none who desire to see the housing question settled will lightly disregard. The nation cannot afford to lose the quarrymen. She cannot depend on the bad French slate now being imported which lasts barely six years, and she ought not to depend on slate produced under the conditions indicated above. The National Co-operative Quarries can prevent that dependence. They have secured a quarry on the Crown Estate near Llanberis. They propose to employ at that quarry that same human material which Lord Penrhyn rejects. and these men are now engaged in Twinning the slate that is here offered to Labour.



Inside the Cutting Mill.

As to the quality of the slate no doubt can exist. The quarries, the Cook and Ddol, situate at Llanberis, Carnarvonshire, were most carefully selected. They are well developed

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and contain practically inexhaustible deposits of slates—hard, durable, and clean. It is alleged that a man may walk in security from a roof of Cook slates, and that none will break beneath



ARTISTIC EFFECT OF SLATE.

Entrance Lodge roofed and weathered with Slates.

him. Certain is it that the slates are admirably suited for the workmen's roof which needs no fancifully æsthetic material, but or e for wear and tear. Cook slates can endure all weathers, and any reasonable pressure. They are straight, firm and strong, "the very slates," a Bethesda quarryman told the writer, "that I would have on my own cottage." More, their use demands good building and is a guarantee that the roof has been well and truly made.

Ar. Fred Swift, Secretary of the Somerset Miners' Association, writes of them that "the slates supplied from the Cook and Ddol for the roofing of the new offices at Radstock are substantial, of good colour, and moderate in price," and recommends: that the slates be used in all Trade Union and Co-operative buildings, advice notably followed by the Garden City Press at Hischin.

Mr. Lidstone, with thirty years' experience of the building trade, says:-

"I have submitted samples of the Cook and Ddol slates to expert London buyers, and in each case the expression of opinion has been that the slates are exceptionally strong, and must make a most durable roof. This confirms what I have stated in respect of them; so that you may with every confidence recommend the slate as the most suitable roof-covering for workmen's dwellings in respect of cost, durability, and small outlay in future repairs."

Quality apart, one other consideration should endear Cooperative slates to those who care for industrial progress. The Quarries stand on land that is, to all intents and purposes. National property, the rents and royalties from which go, not to private persons, but to the State, and are applied directly in

relief of taxation. In developing its Cook Quarry, the Society is using the one existing instalment of Land Nationalization, and on that ground merits the warm and active support of all land nationalizers. The royalty is paid on the value of the slates sold. The lease is renewable without fine. The land, in fact, is held and worked under equitable conditions. The result, so far as the purchaser of the slate goes, is obvious. He will pay a fair price for that slate, not one inflated by the exactions of land monopoly.



ARTISTIC EFFECT OF SLATE.

Old Slated House in Onimperlé.

Nor will the price of that slate be affected by the "slate ring," that evil child of monopoly which has succeeded in imposing something like a roof-tax on almost every house built and contain practically inexhaustible deposits of slates—hard, durable, and clean. It is alleged that a man may walk in security for a roof of Cook slates, and that none will break beneath



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The Quarry Office and Engine Shed

This, then, is what the National Co-operative Quarries propose to do. They propose to produce slate under fair conditions independent alike of the exactions of the land monopolist or of the sweater. They propose to sell to the public at a fair price, and to refuse to be bound to the middleman. What do they want you to do for them? First, to see that wherever Labour is a force, that force is exerted to ensure Trade Union slate being used. Wherever a housing scheme is on foot, wherever a Trade Union is building, wherever public bodies bound by the fair wage clause are erecting dwellings for the workers, every effort should be made to see that "clean" slate is used, not that on which Penrhynism has left such indelible marks. Surely it is not too much to expect that on Town Councils and Corporations Labour will insist on "clean" slate being used. Let it be repeated that this slate is excellent in quality; it is no dearer than other

slate because tribute has not to be paid to the landlord and middleman. On every ground, therefore, Labour and the friends of Labour should make every effort to see that the slate is purchased, and that in any contracts they may be able to influence, Co-operative slates only should be used, and the Directors appeal unhesitatingly to those whose duty it is to represent Labour and to fight for fair conditions on the numerous public bodies throughout the country. To them it should be an imperative duty to see that Trade Union slate only is used. The Quarry is now secured. Capital to work it is coming to hand. What we want is custom. For once Labour is to have a chance of establishing an industry! Surely, all who are interested in her emancipation will help this unique experiment to the support it deserves.

Occasionally an objection is urged. Slate, it is said, should be abolished, and the aesthetic tile, beloved of the speculative builder, should be substituted. Slate, it is urged, can never be



ARTISTIC EFFECT OF SLATE.

Old Slated Houses in Quimperlé

artistic. Tiles are always so. But on this point hear an authority, Mr. H. Clapham Lander, A.R.I.B.A., who writes:—

"There is a prevalent idea that, excluding thatch, red tiles constitute the only artistic roof covering, nor can the fact be disputed that,

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"The reason is not far to seek; a revolt has set in, and very properly so, against the monotony and ugliness of the houses which have been springing up on every hand and which are often referred to as 'brick boxes with slate lids.' This revolt should be directed not so nuch against the materials as such, as against the way in which

they have been used.

"The fact is, it is quite possible to use both slates and tiles with beautiful and harmonious results. The slate treatment is, under certain conditions, much to be preferred to the tile treatment. I have seen houses roofed with tiles in certain parts of the country which looked quite out of keeping with their surroundings, and which would

have been more pleasing with grey slate roofs.

"Everyone who has visited the west coast of Brittany knows with what happy effect slate has been used there, not only as a roofing material, but also as a weathering to the walls. These old Breton towns vith their slated houses draw, every year, crowds of artists of all nations lities, whose easels stand at every street corner. If anyone doubts whether slate can be used with artistic effect, let him visit Quimperlé. The colour of the slates used is chiefly a dark grey. In course of time these slates become covered with a growth of lichen of a rich golden green.

"Hany modern architects use slates with good effect. Small thick slates generally look better than the larger sizes. A slate weathering

has the additional advantage of keeping a wall very dry.

"Slates, offering as they do, the cheapest means of covering a roof, have naturally been used upon the cheapest kinds of building. In the future, it is to be hoped that the public will appreciate that the slate is not without artistic merit of its own, if used in the right way and under suitable conditions."

If words fail to convince, the photographs supplied must succeed.

Of the Labour view of the Quarries the following is an authoritative statement:—

A WORD TO LABOUR.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,-

We write to request your earnest consideration of "The National Co-operative Quarries," which is a Trade Union effort. Trade Union officials form the majority of the Board, and it is the only



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Quarry society or enterprise pledged to employ none but Trade Union Labour, and to pay the Union Rates. This should ensure for it your immediate attention, and that of all Trade Unionists; for without this safeguard, profit-sharing may, and does, prove entirely illusory so far as the vorkmen employed are concerned, and may still leave them unfailly paid and "sweated."

We would ask you to note that many working-class societies, as well us public bodies, are to-day building dwellings for artisans on Trade Union lines, and are insisting, through the fair wage clause in contructs, on Trade Union conditions. It is but reasonable to suppose that such will give our slate fair consideration. If they do this, we believe they will find it eminently suitable for their purpose, and will accordingly purchase.

We propose to hold a conference of Trade Union delegates shortly at LI unberis in order that they may themselves visit and inspect the property. Meanwhile may we ask that you will bring this letter, and the enclosed particulars, before your Executive at an early date.

Yours fraternally,

(Signed) JOHN HODGE, M.P., Secretary, British Steel Smelters.

(Signed) D. C. CUMMINGS, Secretary, Boiler Makers' Society.

(Signed) S. H. WHITEHOUSE, Agent, Somerset Miners.

(Signed) J. O'GRADY, M.P., Secretary, Furnishing Trades.



ARTISTIC EFFECT OF SLATE.

Old Houses, Quimperlé, showing slated roofs and slate weathering on walls.

This view has been practically adopted by the entire Progressive press, as witness the following extracts:—

INDEPENDENT REVIEW

The projected development of the mineral, and especially of the slatebearing, Crown Lands of North Wales, on co-operative principles, is likely to prove one of the most remarkable constructive efforts yet attempted in this country by the organized workers and their friends.

WEEKLY TIMES AND ECHO-

A Board such as this represents the best elements of the labour movement, and commands plenty of sound business and administrative capacity.

THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN-

The strong Trade Union representation on the Board should first of all ensure for the slates a large market. The number of working-men's Societies building to-day for their members is considerable, and constitutes an increasingly important lactor in the slate trade. The Quarries will be the only ones conducted strictly under Trade Union conditions, pledged to employ Union Labour and Union Labour only, and to pay Union rates. To this provision the friends of the new enterprise attach great importance.

REYNOLD'S NEWSPAPER-

Trade Unionists, Co-operators, and those interested in promoting Cooperative production, in nationalizing the land, and in destroying the effects of Penrhynism, should support the Society.

LABOUR LEADER-

The circumstance that the enterprise was projected as a direct means of reducing the oppressive monopoly of Lord Penthyn in the district, and as a means of bringing some measure of Trade Union freedom into the slate quarry employment, gives the scheme a strong claim upon Labour sympathy. There is, besides, the further fact that the project is intended to inaugurate a system of Co-operative production under practical Trade Union supervision, and that stress will be laid rather upon proper wage and other conditions of employmen: than upon the principle of profit-sharing, though the latter is embodied in the scheme.

The names of the Directorate itself are a guarantee of the sound labour character of the undertaking.

LEICESTER PIONEER-

The bona fides of the enterprise is vouched for by the names of the directorate. It deserves the support of every labour sympathiser in England. Properly managed and financed, it should be a success almost from the first. The market for its product exists without any necessity for creating one; the price of slates has been carefully kept up by the small ring of North Wales quarry-owners; trained labour is at hand, and experts report that the Quarry is already wisely and economically managed.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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It is widely echoed in the views of many public and private persons, whose opinions of the social value of the National Cooperative Quarries are indicated in those given below, selected as representative of many others received.

The Rev. Canon Scott Holland:

Every one who cares for the future of Industrial Democracy must wish, from the bottom of his heart, for the success of your gallant endeavour.

Mr. J. Fred. Smith:

40, Ferningham Road, New Cross, S.E.

The most attractive feature of your Company has always been to my middle, the fact that it secures to the workmen not only employment at a living wage, but a prospect of participating in the profits, which, I hope, will, before long, figure in its accounts. I believe this is a sound and just basis for such a concern as ours.

Sympathy, in this case, does not mean charity (except in its best sense of $lor \hat{v}$), for my belief is that the Quarry has before it a future of independence and of substantial profit to all concerned.



Workmen and Apprentices

The Rev. R. J. Campbell:

Hill Lodge, Enfield, N.

Your experiment is, I am sure, well worthy of the support of all who had sympathy with the workers during that unhappy period, i.e., the Debeck Strike

If you are successful in your undertaking, it will be an encouragement to the working man everywhere to become his own capitalist.

Mr. G. F. Hipperson, Secretary, Norwich and District Trades and Labour Council:—

"Trade Union labour on national lands is a good and sound basis."

The Rev. Edward Harris:

Bullinghope Vicarage, Hereford.

I am convinced of the rightness of your aims, and from the bottom of my heart I hope that the work may be efficiently and successfully carried out. It will be a most useful object lesson, and, if successful, will help the great cause of the emancipation of labour.

Mr. Stephen S. Tayler, ex-President of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union:—

To develop the natural resources of the British Isles by co-operative work is most desirable, and honestly patriotic.

The Rev. Edward N. Hoare, M.A.:

The Vicarage, Oakhill Park, Liverpool, E.

I am very much interested in your venture; it is certainly in the right direction and deserves success.

Mr. E. Richardson, of the Stratford-on-Avon

Co-operative Society:

Stratford-on-Avon.

I am glad to find by your rules and by other means that yours is a true Co-operative Society, and trust you will receive that support which your Society deserves.

The Rev. J. F. B. Tinling:

Wavertree, Liverpool.

I heartily wish you success, being convinced that such co-operation offers the best possible remedy for the wrongs of labour.

Mr. J. Macbeth Bain:

75. Warwick Road, W.

Anyone visiting Llanberis, or Bethesda, or any of the North Welsh centres of slate quarrying, can see and feel what this new co-operation movement means.

It means not only an object lesson on true Co-operation to the world, but also the very preservation of one of the finest types of our people in the Welsh quarryman.

Nothing less than this does it mean; and for this reason there is no movement in Britain at present so claims my sympathy as the National Co-operative Quarries, for in it is indeed the application of the Christian or Brotherhood principles of living not for oneself, but for the neighbour, and, in the neighbour, for all.

The Rev. Cecil M. Bayliss, B.A.:

Addlestone, Surrey.

I feel I must have a share in this philanthropic enterprise, and I only with I could do more to help on such a splendid co-operative work, which I trust will be of real and lasting benefit to the Labour world.

It is widely echoed in the views of many public and private persons, whose opinions of the social value of the National Cooperative Quarries are indicated in those given below, selected as representative of many others received.

The Rev. Canon Scott Holland

Every one who cares for the future of Industrial Democracy must wish, from the bottom of his heart, for the success of your gallant endeavour.

Mr. J. Fred. Smith:

40, Ferningham Road, New Cross, S.E.

The most attractive leature of your Company has always been to my middle fact that it secures to the workmen not only employment at a living wage, but a prospect of participating in the profits, which, I hope, will, before long, figure in its accounts. I believe this is a sound and just basis for such a concern as ours.

Sympathy, in this case, does not mean charity (except in its best sense of loc_0), for my belief is that the Quarry has before it a future of independence and of substantial profit to all concerned.



Workmen and Apprentices.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell:

Hill Lodge, Enfield, N.

Your experiment is, I am sure, well worthy of the support of all who has sympathy with the workers during that unhappy period, i.e., the Bethesda Strike

If you are successful in your undertaking, it will be an encouragement to the working man everywhere to become his own capitalist.

Mr. G. F. Hipperson, Secretary, Norwich and District Trades and Labour Council:

"Trade Union labour on national lands is a good and sound basis.

The Rev. Edward Harris:

Bullinghope Vicarage, Hereford,

I am convinced of the rightness of your aims, and from the bottom of my heart I hope that the work may be efficiently and successfully carried out. It will be a most useful object lesson, and, if successful, will help the great cause of the emancipation of labour

Mr. Stephen S. Tayler, ex-President of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union:

To develop the natural resources of the British Isles by co-operative work is most desirable, and honestly patriotic.

The Rev. Edward N. Hoare, M.A.:

The Vicarage, Oakhill Park, Liverpool, E

I am very much interested in your venture, it is certainly in the right direction and deserves success

Mr. E. Richardson, of the Stratford-on-Avon

Co-operative Society:

Stratford-on-Avon.

I am glad to find by your rules and by other means that yours is a true Co-operative Society, and trust you will receive that support which your Society deserves.

The Rev. J. F. B. Tinling:

Wavertree, Liverpool.

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Mr. J. Macbeth Bain:

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Lady Henry Somerset:

I have the fullest sympathy with the splendid effort you are making, which deserves the support and co-operation of all interested in industrial questions.

The Rev. A. M. Mitchell:

Burton Wood Vicarage, Newton-le-Willows.

I am sure the Co-operative Quarries mean a splendid chance for the Slate Workers. They have suffered much, and it is time their sorrow turned to joy.

Mr. John Hodge, M.P., Secretary of the British Steel S nelters, Mill and Tinplate Workers Association:

My Executive, being desirous to help on the success of the National Co-operative Quarries, have to-day decided to take up further shares, for which I enclose cheque. That is better than sympathy.

Mr. H. Belloc, M.P.:

The Reform Club, Pall Mall, S.W.

I am so much convinced that the future lies between co-operation in instruction and the form of slavery, that my conviction may appear extravagant. I know with what peculiar difficulties Co-operative production is beset. Two generations ago distributive Co-operation was beset with, perhaps, greater difficulties, and yet those were surmounted as these may be. Certainly you could have no better field for beginning an experiment of this kind.

The Rev. Will Reason, M.A., of New Southgate:

The National Co-operative Quarries, Limited, is a combination of forces and conce unique and prophetic. The land is the people's, under the Crown. The labour is trade union, and shares co-operatively in the profits. The capital is also largely owned by Trade Unions, and the other holders are aiming at the democratisation of industry rather than personal gain. It should point the way to further combinations on the same lines, and receive such support as to ensure complete success.

Let the hope be expressed that this view will commend itself to the reader also, and that he will translate his sympathy into practical and prompt support.

Form of Application for Shaves.

THE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE QUARRIES,

LIMITED.

To the BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

I. the undersigned, hereby apply for

transferable shares of £1 each in the above-named Society, and I enclose herewith £:; , being a deposit of 5s, per share (to be returned if the shares are not allotted to me), and 1s. Entrance Fee.

SIGNED

Address

OCCUPATION

Dated

1906.

THE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE QUARRIES,

Te THE SECRETARY,

37 & 38 Temple House, Tallis Street, London, E.C.

Please send me Price List and Samples of your Slate.

SIGNED

Address

DESCRIPTION



END OF TITLE